# Executive Summary

The goal of IowAccess Project 7 is to provide Iowa citizens with a single electronic gateway to information on federal, state, and local government regulations, licenses, and permits. Customers have access to this information through multiple media formats, including the Internet, 24-hour telephone messaging, and document fax back. Furthermore, if the customer chooses, the system will transparently connect them electronically to the appropriate agencies to initiate the business license and permitting application process.

## Background of Previous Systems

The first component of Project 7 is business licensing information. Currently, business license information is provided by the Iowa Department of Economic Development through the Business License Information Center software application. This software contains a one-paragraph summary of state business license requirements and the contact information for each state licensing agency. Internet access to the licensing information is not available. State license information is manually gathered through annual paper-based surveys.

Customers utilizing the Business License Information Center are mailed a list of state agencies they must contact. It is the customer's responsibility to follow-up individually with each state agency that requires a license.

Customers are sent a paper-based survey on a monthly basis to determine if they were successful in starting a business. Information on successfully started businesses are manually entered into a separate Iowa Department of Economic Development application called Business Tracking. Business Tracking provides follow-up resources for started businesses.

Only state government information is included in the current Business License Information Center software application. Moreover, professional license and regulatory information are not part of the Business License Information Center software.

The second component of Project 7 is regulatory information. Regulatory information is not currently available in an organized fashion. Regulatory information is only available through each specific agency.

The third component of Project 7 is professional license information and the renewal of certain professional licenses through the Internet. Professional license information is currently available from the Iowa Department of Commerce. Professional license renewals are only available by way of a manual, paper-based process. These renewals occur on a bi-annual basis.



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## New System

The goal to provide citizens with a single electronic gateway to governmental information is accomplished through two components:

- A new software application.
- Design of the new "Front Door" web page.

These two new components combine the various categories of governmental information and provide a single delivery mechanism for the customer.

The new software being developed contains federal, state, and local government information for the following categories:

- Business licensing
- Professional licensing
- Regulatory information
- Financial and technical information

The summary information is collected through electronic mail surveys sent to all participating government agencies. This information is available to customers via the Internet, Fax, mail systems or telephone. Customers who choose to initiate the licensing process are electronically connected to the appropriate government agencies to initiate the approval process.

Customers are sent a follow-up survey via electronic mail to determine if they were successful business start-ups. If an electronic mail address is not available, the survey is sent through mail systems. Information on successful business start-ups is electronically sent to the Business Tracking application at the Iowa Department of Economic Development.

The second component of the new system is the design of the "Front Door" web. The "Front Door" web page will provide Internet access to the summary information contained within the new software application. The Internet design component will also include specifications for Internet enabled processing of professional license renewal applications. Both web pages will be implemented by Iowa Interactive and incorporated into the overall IowAccess web strategy.

Project 7 had anticipated implementing the professional licensing component on the web in December of 1997. However, lack of a digital signature law inhibited the implementation plans. The Iowa legislature is contemplating the digital signature law this session. Even if legislation is passed, development of the corresponding administrative rules for the digital signature law will prevent the professional licensing component from be implemented until December of 1998.

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## System Differences

The new system improves the current systems in the following ways:

- Intergovernmental information is incorporated.

- Provides a common delivery mechanism of governmental information with the inclusion of business license, professional license, regulatory, financial, and technical information.

- Information contained in the new software application is organized based on Standard Industrial Classification codes.  This enables information sharing with other government agencies.

- Provides a "Front Door" to governmental information on the Internet.

- The licensing approval process is initiated in one step.

- Successful business start-up information is electronically transferred to the Business Tracking software at the Iowa Department of Economic Development.

## Benefits

- A true first-stop center providing customers access to governmental information through multiple media formats, including the Internet, 24-hour telephone messaging, and document fax back.

- Customers benefit from increased business license, regulatory, professional license, financial, and technical information being available.

- Improved customer service is achieved by coordinating customer's licensing applications with the appropriate licensing authorities.

- Information integrity is improved by automating the information shared between governmental agencies and their corresponding software applications.

- A reduction of paperwork and improved response time by federal, state, and local government, thus freeing resources for other tasks.

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## Technology of the New System

The new software is temporarily referred to as "First Stop License". The "First Stop License" software will reside at the Iowa Department of Economic Development.

The "First Stop License" software consists of two applications: First Stop and First Stop Admin. First Stop will facilitate the daily customer-service related operations of the Small Business Resource Office of the Iowa Department of Economic Development, in terms of responding to requests for information from customers. First Stop Admin, will be built to handle the task of maintaining the static data such as lookup tables, as well as the information on agencies, businesses, business and professional licenses and government regulations.

The Project 7 development team will deliver the design specifications of the "Front Door" and professional licensing renewal web sites. The design specifications will be developed in cooperation with Iowa Interactive and will be incorporated into the overall IowAccess architecture.

## Connection with External Systems

The web specifications developed by the Project 7 development team will be implemented by Iowa Interactive. The Project 7 development team will coordinate the web development effort to aid in the successful completion of this task.

The "First Stop License" software will include integration to the Business Tracking software application at the Iowa Department of Economic Development.

## Completed Tasks

Project 7 tasks completed to date are listed below:

- Project Team has been identified and organized.

- Project scope has been defined.

- Government agency involvement and tasks have been determined.

- Analysis of business requirements has been accomplished.

  - ✓ Data requirements
  - ✓ User interface
  - ✓ Business rules

- Identified and met business customers to gather customer needs.

- Technical Foundation of the software application has been determined.

  - ✓ Database
  - ✓ Prototype
  - ✓ Procedure definitions
  - ✓ Initial design of Web sites

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## Next Steps

- Install development infrastructure at the Iowa Department of Economic Development. This involves installing the necessary hardware and software components to enable software development of the "First Stop License" software.

- Finalize the format of summary information contained within "First Stop License". All participating agencies must review the proposed structure of the summary information. This format impacts information maintenance and presentation to customers.

- Create the physical database at the Iowa Department of Economic Development which will store "First Stop License" data.

- Determine final Internet design of "Front Door web pages and the Department of Commerce Professional License renewal web pages.

- Program the two "First Stop License" software applications that will be installed at the Department of Economic Development.

- All business licenses, regulatory permits, and professional licenses must be mapped to Standard Industrial Classification codes as applicable.

- Conversion of business customer information currently stored in the Business License Information Center software at the Iowa Department of Economic Development. The converted customer information will be loaded in the "First Stop License" Software.

- Conversion of the state business license information currently stored in the Business License Information Center software at the Iowa Department of Economic Development. The converted license information will be loaded in the "First Stop License" Software.

- Conversion of professional license information currently stored at Iowa WorkForce Development. The converted professional license information will be loaded in the "First Stop License" software.

- Regulatory information must be collected from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and entered into the "First Stop License" software.

- Following the load of converted business license, professional license, regulatory, and customer information into the "First Stop License" software, the appropriate agencies will verify the data.

- Test functionality of "First Stop License" applications.

- Install "First Stop License" software at the Iowa Department of Economic Development.

- Coordinate "First Stop License" Internet development Iowa Interactive.

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## Future Phases

- Electronically integrate "First Stop License" software directly with all participating agencies to further improve customer service of license and permit applications.

- Define additional regulatory information to add to the "First Stop License" software.

- Implement the renewal of Professional licenses through the Internet. The Project 7 team will deliver the design of this component.

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